

Back to School Safety: Tips to Keep Your Children Safe.

It's time to prepare for back-to-school. Safety should be a priority for every family as children return to their classrooms. Whether children walk, ride their bike or take the bus to school, it's important that they take good safety measures. Learn more about the tips you can follow to keep your children safe on their way to and from school.



Tip # 1: Walking Safety

Children ten years and younger should walk with an adult on their way to and from school. Show them how to cross the street at corners by stopping at the curb and looking left-right-left for traffic before crossing. Teach your children to walk on a sidewalk if one is available. If no sidewalk is available, tell your children to walk facing the traffic. Remind them to always walk when crossing a street and never walk between parked cars.



Tip # 2: Bike Safety

The two best protections for your children when biking to and from school are a properly fitted helmet and a good understanding of traffic safety rules. Before riding, inflate tires properly and check that their brakes work. Practice bicycle skills with your children in an area without traffic. Teach your children to ride on the right side of the road, in the same direction as cars, and in a single file. Your children must learn to come to a complete stop before crossing the street and always walk the bike across the street.



Tip # 3: Bus Safety

Riding a school bus is a great way for your child to get to and from school. However, children need to be very careful around the school bus "danger zone": 10 feet in front, 10 feet behind, and on each side of the bus.

- Children should always board and exit the bus at locations that provide a safe access to the bus or to the school building.
- Make sure your child walks where she or he can see the bus driver.
- Remind your child to wait for the bus to stop before approaching it from the curb.
- When riding the bus, make sure your child understands they must remain seated and keep their head and arms inside the bus at all times.



Tip # 4: Backpack Safety

The recommendation for a child's backpack is that it should weigh no more than 10 to 15 percent of the child's body weight.

- Make sure your child's backpack has wide straps and a padded back, or purchase a rolling backpack.
- Both straps should be used to evenly distribute the weight.
- Always place the heaviest items in the backpack first and only carry necessary items.

Tip # 5: Playground Safety

Use the following tips to make sure that your children are safe on the playground:



- Teach children that pushing, shoving or crowding while on the playground can be dangerous.
- Encourage your child only to use playgrounds with a soft surface.
- Avoid playgrounds with concrete, grass and dirt surfaces, as they are too hard and may cause injury.
- Children under the age of four should not use climbing equipment.
- Watch older children when they are climbing on playground equipment.

Tip # 6: Driving Safety

Parents, please remember:



- When entering a school zone, be sure to slow down and follow all traffic laws. Never block a crosswalk.
- Be on the lookout for school zone signals and always follow the speed limits.
- Stop when directed by school patrol sign, school patrol officer or crossing guard.
- Be aware of children in school zones, residential areas, sidewalks, playgrounds, in the streets, in school parking lots and parks.
- Don't honk your horn or do anything that would scare or rush children even if you have the legal right-of-way.

For information about back to school safety:

National Safety Council

<http://www.nsc.org/act/events/Pages/keep-children-safe-at-school.aspx>

Safe Kids Worldwide

<http://www.safekids.org/walkingsafetytips>